CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

General Purposes

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Purposes** held on **Wednesday 15th January, 2020**, Room 18.12 , 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Paul Swaddle (Chairman), David Boothroyd, Melvyn Caplan and Robert Rigby

Also Present: Hazel Best (Principal Solicitor), Michael Carson (Principal Solicitor) and Reuben Segal, Head of Committee and Governance Services

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 It was noted that Councillor Melvyn Caplan had replaced Councillor Tim Mitchell.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations.

3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Chairman, with the consent of the Members present, signed the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2019.

4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW - ELECTORAL WARDS WITHIN THE CITY COUNCIL BOUNDARY

4.1 The Committee considered the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Westminster City Council.

4.2 The Committee noted that the LGBCE had, following the publication of its draft recommendations, very slightly amended the electorate numbers in four wards: Pimlico, Riverside, St James's and West End. All four wards are expected to have good electoral equality by 2025. The overall electoral forecast for the authority remains the same.

4.3 The Chairman referred the Committee to paragraph 76 of the LGBCE electoral review which related to the West End ward. The LGBCE had expressed an interest in receiving views on the boundary in the south west of the ward.

4.4 The Chairman tabled the following suggested response:

The GP committee notes the Boundary Commission report and broadly welcomes its findings particularly the approach taken with major roads as Boundaries where possible.

The committee would like to make one representation in respect of the proposed St. James's ward and West End ward, the Commission asked "whether Shaftesbury Avenue could be considered a stronger boundary". There is support for a Shaftesbury Avenue boundary from some local residents in Vale Royal House, Newport Court, who are the bulk of electors in the area proposed to be moved from St. James's ward to West End ward. Also, some members of the Chinese community agree that Shaftesbury Avenue would make "a stronger boundary" and argue that Chinatown's inclusion for the past 18 years in St. James's ward has helped cement Chinatown's identity as a distinct part of Westminster as a whole as opposed to just being thought of as a district within Soho. Therefore, the Council proposes that ward boundary should remain as at present along Shaftesbury Avenue.

4.5 Following discussion, the representation as tabled was put to the vote and it was:

4.6 **RESOLVED:** (For: Councillors Swaddle, Caplan and Rigby; Against: Councillor Boothroyd).

1. That the representation as tabled and set out above be agreed.

2. That the representation be submitted to the LGBCE as the Council's formal response to the consultation on the draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Westminster City Council.

The Meeting ended at 6.04 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____ **DATE** _____